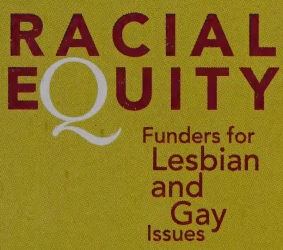
The questions hold the answers.



Racial Equity Campaign Overview

What could a social change m
imagination and concrete change
fissures its organizations and dilu
an enormous question, persisten
scope. History asserts that in its
populace at its cruel worst and,
every gross injustice—a trailbl
freedom. At its best, it dreams
opportunity on the job, in our sch
the media and under the law, r
gender identity or gender. Yet wit
national life, its effects remain-
social change movements stumb
with multitudinous lives, notably
and queer (LGBTQ) people of col
monumental, often entwined
responsibility? Because enormou
posed is an idea revealed. This is

ɔvement accomplish — in force,
– if it bridged the racial divide that
ɛs its potential? It is, at first glance,
in its urgency, devastating in its
lifetime, our country has seen a
ı response, its most inspired. For
ɪzer, a remarkable step towards
f broad acceptance, fairness and
ɔols, among our families, through
gardless of race, class, sexuality,
out question, in every facet of our
and our lives, organizations and
ɛ in their advances. And for those
esbian, gay, bisexual, transgender
, the confounding challenges are
What then, we ask, is our
is not impossible. And a question
question for our times.

And these are the questions for our sector.

The persistent questions, those worth asking, typically have no easy answers. In turn, many of us dedicate our lives in response.

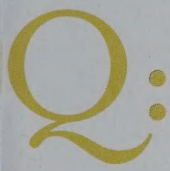
In 2006, when Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues altered its long-held mission to one that focused on dealing with the racial, economic and gender inequities facing LGBTQ communities, the questions were abundant: Where would this determined mission begin? How could we best draw on the strengths of our sector's foremost thinkers to help us realize an inclusive, pluralistic democracy? Ultimately, what would it mean for all of us if we achieved our goals?

Consistently, these conversations came back to the unfulfilled promise of racial equity. Had our visions for social change dealt with the racial barriers facing communities of color? Would any of our goals be attained if we refrained from forging those necessary alliances to broad-based movements for justice? And could success be claimed if the iniquitous racial status quo remained?

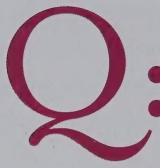
These became the central questions. They must be asked—and they can be answered.

The questions which one asks oneself begin,
at least, to illuminate the world,
and become one's key to the experience of others.

–James Baldwin



How strong could our movements be — how attainable our goals — if we asked ourselves the possibility questions, the soul-searching questions, the personal *and* institutional questions, to begin answering: What is our collective role in achieving equity in today's world? And why?



How strong could our movements be—how attainable our goals—if we infused our leadership circles with fresh, new perspectives, creating a more inclusive, democratic discourse? How effective could we become?

Racial equity, once defined by the shared values of fairness and morality, is too often taken for granted. As a result, a discussion of racism has emerged focused narrowly on individual acts of malice... As long as the systems, structures and unconscious motivations that shape racism are obscured, racism will remain embedded in the fabric of society and transcend even our best individual intentions.

-Applied Research Center

Investing in the vibrant spectrum of our communities

Whether by interest, identity or geography, a community defines where we belong, as well as how we understand and interact with one another. Across the country, community foundations regularly draw on the resources of their residents to help build the vibrant, multicultural society they envision.

Through the **Racial Equity Grantmaking Initiative**, eight community and public foundations have received nearly $1 million from Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues to support the leadership and build the capacity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people of color and their organizations. Participating foundations will match the dollars 1:1 (for a total of $2 million) and provide both grants and capacity building to local LGBTQ groups that are led by and for people of color. Further, to ensure long-term sustainability, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will seek additional dollars for this grantmaking initiative in the years that follow.

Evaluating change. Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will work with both the participating foundations and local LGBTQ people of color groups to implement an evaluation plan that measures success for LGBTQ people of color leaders, their organizations and the foundations that support them. Specifically, the evaluation plan will assess whether the initiative 1) strengthens organizations 2) enhances skill sets among group leaders and 3) diversifies grantmaking practice so that funders effectively integrate a racial equity lens into their policies and practices.

Over the years, an assortment of innovative funders have piloted a variety of grantmaking strategies to fortify our movement, challenge our shared opponents and move our communities closer to cultural acceptance, legal recognition and widespread equity. Despite these wins, many of these practices, policies and analytical tools have stayed within their foundations, preventing broader duplication as well as systemic, sector-wide change.

In 2008, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will release an **LGBTQ Grantmakers Report Card on Racial Equity**, a sector-wide study assessing how LGBTQ foundations address racial equity across their grantmaking, governing documents, policies and practices, demographics and leadership, and strategic communications.

How strong could our movements be—how attainable our goals—if we dealt with the racial divide splintering our organizations, movements and society? Would we tackle structural inequities, unify activists across racial lines and build the trust necessary to improve all of our communities?

By distilling key lessons, best practices and lingering challenges, the report card aims to forge a dialogue about the potential of working across communities to repair racial inequities and strengthen our foundations and movements. And because many grantmakers are poised to begin investing in LGBTQ communities, the findings also will be used to garner the support of broader, mainline foundations for our many pressing issues.

Since effective racial equity grantmaking practice requires both analysis and institutional adjustments, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will produce a **Racial Equity Tool Kit** that compiles tools from the field and addresses many inquiries surfaced throughout the racial equity report card conversations. For foundations invested in creating opportunity and access for people of color, these tools are meant to assist them in improving their internal operations as well as their grantmaking. We're confident that the blueprint exists for an inclusive, democratic foundation that exemplifies racial equity.

To form communities, respond to political and cultural currents, and to shape a policy discourse uniquely their own, marginalized communities have brought to life unique, home-grown approaches that improve lives and redress deeply embedded, institutional inequities. For many of them, their practices have stemmed from a wisdom sown in upheaval and perseverance, in many cases with minimal support from foundations.

Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will partner with organizations working within communities of color to spur institutional giving to LGBTQ communities of color. As an initial resource, **Building Communities: Autonomous Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer People of Color Organizations in the U.S.** describes the organizational characteristics and fiscal realities of LGBTQ organizations run by and for people of color. In 2009, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will release a second version of this report, augmenting the initial version and integrating information on projects housed within broader-themed organizations that serve LGBTQ communities of color.

The range of issues affecting communities of color serves as the impetus for the **Q&A Racial Equity Issue Briefs**, which will feature interviews with key thinkers and movement shakers working at the intersection of race, sexuality and gender identity. These issue briefs will illuminate how innovators have crafted programs and policies that respond to the key challenges of our day and how the philanthropic community can support an inclusive approach to LGBTQ rights.

Life's most urgent question is: what are we doing for others?

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Q:

How strong could our movements be—how attainable our goals—if we dedicated ourselves to removing the structural barriers that prevent fairness and opportunity for everyone? Would we prosper collectively?

Q: How strong could our movements be—how attainable our goals—if what was reflected in the news showcased the best in each of us and gave positive visibility to the most marginalized among us? Would we see ourselves anew?

Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the "real" world unless it first happens in the images in our heads.

—Gloria Anzaldua

Raising the visibility of LGBTQ people of color and their key issues

Media shapes our lives. It affects how people process images about themselves and others. And when responsible, a free press holds our institutions accountable and relates the complexity of American life.

Recognizing the dearth of positive media portrayals of LGBTQ people of color, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues has launched a **National Media Campaign** to raise public visibility about the many issues affecting our diverse communities. In partnership with the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and Make Waves, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will work with media outlets around the country, pitching news stories and gradually building awareness about critical racial equity concerns facing LGBTQ communities.

In tandem with the media campaign, a **Racial Equity Spokesperson Council** comprised of more than 70 professionals working in philanthropy, LGBTQ organizations, and broader social and economic justice endeavors will respond to media and help the coverage of LGBTQ communities. Together, they will embody the concerted efforts that philanthropy can support when it aligns itself with a vision for widespread equity.

Media Campaign Partners
GLAAD www.glaad.org
Make Waves www.makewavesnotnoise.com

Generating spaces for discussion and creative inquiry has been a central strategy of Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues for more than 25 years. Face-to-face with one another, funders share ideas, debate values and approaches, and come together at points of commonality. Beginning in 2008, our various gatherings will serve to shape the racial equity campaign, posing the questions that will help address one of our greatest historical dilemmas.

Through **Common Vision**—a national, multi-year project that's convening grantmakers in various regions of the country to support widespread equity and healthy communities—Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will provide resources and provoke a dialogue among regional funders about the ways in which racial equity, and other concerns, intertwine with the many issues facing their grantmaking. Common Vision has been initially launched in New England and the Midwest.

Further, at **gatherings nationwide**, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will regularly convene foundations that support LGBTQ issues at the national, regional and local level. In 2008, LGBTQ funders from around the country will assemble at the annual conference of the Council on Foundations.

We recognize that the pool of grantmakers supporting LGBTQ issues must amplify; in the upcoming years, we will identify, educate and organize new LGBTQ grantmakers, creating change from foundation to foundation.

Q: How strong could our movements be—how attainable our goals—if we formed the strategic, sustainable alliances necessary to achieve our many goals? Are we stronger together? Can we do it alone?

Are we consciously asking if there are racial disparities in the arenas where we work?
If so, why do they exist?
Do our strategies align with our reasoning about the disparities?
Are they targeting the right problems?
—GrantCraft and Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, *Grant Making with a Racial Equity Lens* (New York: GrantCraft, 2007).

The goals of the Racial Equity Campaign are:

To support the leadership and build the capacity of LGBTQ people of color and their organizations. Between 2008 and 2010, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues (FLGI) will stimulate an investment of at least $15 million in new or reallocated funding for LGBTQ communities of color.

To encourage a wide array of programmatic responses that repair racial, economic, and gender inequities. Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will ensure that by the end of 2010 no less than 15 percent of all LGBTQ grantmaking by U.S. foundations explicitly reaches LGBTQ communities of color. (In 2006, LGBTQ communities of color received 9 percent of all LGBTQ dollars granted by U.S. foundations, totaling $5.8 million dollars and 234 grants.)[1]

To achieve this shift, FLGI will work closely with foundations nationwide of all types, helping to generate funding for autonomous LGBTQ people of color groups, projects based within broader-themed organizations that explicitly reach LGBTQ communities of color, and any other initiative that enhances opportunity for LGBTQ people of color. Together, these diverse strategies can transform the cultural and political landscape.

To create healthy grantmaking institutions that embody fairness and inclusiveness. Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will assist LGBTQ grantmakers in implementing approaches that model racial equity. The question of racial equity—we believe—is a question about ourselves.

Evaluating change. The annual research conducted by Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues on LGBTQ grantmaking by U.S. foundations will provide much of the necessary data to assess progress towards these goals. Additionally, FLGI will work with grantmakers to create a tracking mechanism that allows them to report their comprehensive giving on racial equity and other equity concerns.

[1] Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations: Calendar Year 2006* (New York: FLGI, 2008).

Q:

How strong could our movements be—how attainable our goals—if we advocated for populations with the greatest needs—those left behind by our democratic institutions? Is this how philanthropy upholds its purpose?

But the question is a matter of the survival and the teaching.
That's what our work comes down to.
No matter where we key into it, it's the same work,
just different pieces of ourselves doing it.

—Audre Lorde

The mission of Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues is to seek equality and rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) individuals and communities by mobilizing philanthropic resources that advance racial, economic and gender justice.

To learn more about the Racial Equity Campaign, please visit www.lgbtfunders.org/RacialEquity.

RACIAL EQUITY

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373

SAVE THE DATE:
A 2nd Annual Gathering of LGBTQ Grantmakers

RACIAL EQUITY
Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues

As part of the Council on Foundation's annual conference in May 2008, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues will convene LGBTQ grantmakers from around the country to network, describe their strategies and collaborations, and discuss the key issues facing LGBTQ communities. This year's gathering will feature a policy roundtable on racial equity among LGBTQ communities, including a dialogue about our first-ever LGBTQ Grantmakers Report Card on Racial Equity. More information to follow.

DATE: May 4, 2008, 9am-5pm

LOCATION: Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, National Harbor, MD

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Kim Ford at kim@lgbtfunders.org or 212-475-2930.

WWW.LGBTFUNDERS.ORG/RACIALEQUITY

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